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ABSTRACT

This paper considers trends in the relationship between English institutions of higher education and those who participate in them. It is suggested that a move from a client-professional toward a customer-provider relationship has occurred. A drawback of the client-professional model is the creation of unequal power relationships; the customer-provider relationship is in danger of changing academic standards to meet customers' demands. The partnership model is offered as an alternative arrangement based on mutual recognition and dependence, although a number of factors make it difficult to maintain both quality and economic viability. Regarding the future, higher education's response to greater autonomy under considerable economic constraint will take the form of accredited activities within the employing organization in a partnership framework. This will create differentiation of the marketplace into two sections: (1) those seeking active partnerships in which high standards are maintained, and (2) those seeking width rather than quality. This, in turn will lead to differentiation within and between universities with educator administration programs, thus continuing the current trend that respects some master's degrees more than others. (LMI)

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MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT FOR EDUCATION: THE CHANGING ROLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

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Abstract: Drawing upon English experience, the author considers trends in the relationship between higher education institutions and those who take part in its programmes. He suggests that there has been a move from a client-professional towards a customer-provider relationship, and considers some of the implications of these two perspectives. The concept of partnership is seen as one towards which higher education should aspire: but there are a number of factors which makes it difficult to maintain both quality and rigour on the one hand, and economic viability on the other.

In the United Kingdom there is a long tradition of university[1] involvement in the continuing professional education of senior staff in schools and colleges. For many years, this largely involved papers in educational administration taught as part of the Master of Education (MEd) degree for practising teachers. These programmes maintained the tradition of most university education, in taking as the 'target' for its activities the individual student. He or she applied as an individual for entrance to the programme; his or her learning was seen as an individual activity, to be assessed on an individual basis (typically through very traditional assessment methods of essays and written examinations), and with individual rewards (the award of a diploma or degree).

In the 1970s there arose more specialized programmes in what came to be called *Education Management,*[2] offered on both a full-time and part-time basis, and at undergraduate and postgraduate levels. Initially these were established within polytechnics. They tended to be specifically concerned with the development of understanding and competencies appropriate to those responsible for leadership roles within educational institutions, rather than the more clearly research orientation of university approaches of the 1960s. However, if the programmes were to be relevant to the student as worker, they had to be relevant also (at least to some extent) to the student's organisation. In practice this meant that syllabuses addressed issues of direct relevance to the management of institutions, and that much student activity was in some way project based.

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1 In this paper, the term 'university' is used to include both universities and polytechnics. Following the Further and Higher Education Act of 1991, the 30 English and Welsh polytechnics now redesignated universities. From September 1992 Sheffield City Polytechnic was renamed 'Sheffield Hallam University'.

2 I have used the terms 'education management' and 'educational administration' as they have been and are used in the United Kingdom, while recognizing the significant differences in the usage of the words (and ideological associations attached to them!) in other parts of the world. The reader from outside of the UK should not assume that words such as 'management' have the same connotation in England as elsewhere.

Specifically, the research dissertation (normal in the university higher degrees) was often replaced by the management project, centring upon report and reflection (in the light of appropriate theory and research) on a practical work-based activity. There thus arose a concern for two types of 'clients': individual students on the one hand, and the concerns of organizations and employers on the other. The primary focus, however, was still upon the individual student as learner.

Changes in Professional Thinking

During the later 1970s and 1980s, many people became critical of the traditional course design accepted by higher education. While many institutions did a good job in providing a stimulating opportunity for individuals to study, there was increasing scepticism as to whether the public purse should be used to provide programmes which were, it was felt, essentially of benefit to individuals and were not adequately job-related.[3] The criticism was not simply directed to the nature of the programmes, but to their very existence: many influential people felt that off-the-job learning, especially within a higher education setting, was just not appropriate to the development of directly job-related skills.

Thus there developed a strong movement which stressed the importance of school-based learning and which was fundamentally in opposition to many of the objectives of higher education courses—a theoretical orientation, critical reflection, sharing of experience across institutions and educational sectors, and so on.

Higher Education's response tended to be partly to emphasise the project-based nature of their programmes (with universities following the polytechnics in stressing the 'practical' nature of the studies); and to set up arrangements whereby higher education staff became available to assist schools and colleges in designing and delivering short courses based in individual schools, local education authorities, or consortia of schools.

Of course many departments (again, particularly in polytechnics), had for a number of years included short courses in their portfolios: but the new emphasis was upon school-based courses, to which staff were sponsored in groups (perhaps from the same school), rather than attracting individual applications. Such courses were often organized according to a 'design brief' provided by the 'employer', and effectively were commissioned programmes. They did not, however, normally carry academic credit towards qualifications. In these cases, while the individual was the learner, the purposes of the programme were much more likely than in the case of degrees syllabuses to be determined by an identification of needs of the institution.

So higher education maintained two types of programme: one (the degree programme) where the 'client' was the individual, but was often attracted to the programme by its applied nature and relevance to the workplace; and short courses where the client typically was an employing organization, and individual participants were their in order to contribute to organizational purposes. Meanwhile, in certain universities the traditional discipline-based courses continued, although on a very much reduced scale.

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[3] It is significant that each year several thousand teachers were given full-time secondment on full pay to undertake diploma and degree studies, while many others were given part-time release during the school day. Therefore the financial and organizational costs to the education system were considerable.

The Introduction of the Market Economy

During the 1980s, under the influence of Thatcherite political and economic assumptions, education was introduced to the ideology of 'market forces': a process which reinforced and fed upon the scepticism of many teachers with respect to in-service training as they had known it. Much funding which had previously been used for in-service training of teachers was removed from higher education, and reallocated to local education authorities. This was done on the assumption that much of it would be distributed to schools, which would make their own decisions concerning whether or not teachers would be financially supported in undertaking management development programmes. Where previously a local authority had received back from central government 75% of salary costs of those sent on such courses, and 100% of fees, now the full cost fell on the Authority and its schools. Not surprisingly, the number of teachers undertaking full-time study dropped dramatically, especially as this happened at the same time as schools and local authorities were being placed under very strong resource pressures.

The Government's view was and is that the best way of ensuring both accountability and quality of higher education provision was to transform the course member from individual (or corporate) 'student' to 'customer': and quality of provision in education has become translated into the concept of 'customer care'. In order to ensure such a relationship, resources have been handed to the school: both the economic resource of money (via the delegation of school budgets) and the political resource of autonomy (with a much strengthened role of school governing bodies and headteachers *vis-a-vis* the local education authority).

Certainly for decades higher education has been used to a competitive marketplace, with attempts to attract able students in the face of competition from other institutions. However, substantially it was recognised that it was the role of the university to define both the academic field of educational management and administration, to reflect this understanding in its syllabuses, and to define what constituted student success (criteria for assessment, level of qualifications, and so on).

The more recent debate has introduced further elements, some of which run (and perhaps are designed to run) counter to established academic traditions. What has been emphasised by the Government and its agencies is the right of 'customers' to determine what they wish to buy, and to 'shop around' for the best price: a price which may not be in terms of cash alone, but, for example, the amount or level of work involved in obtaining a qualification. Consequently, there has been a tendency for some teachers to seek qualifications 'on the cheap': and this is particularly true of the MEd degree. In my view a number of universities have dropped minimal standards for their MEd degree significantly, in response to such 'market forces'.

By placing funding very much into the hands of the employer, the current position emphasises the employer, rather than the student, as 'customer'. While many teachers still choose to spend their own time and money in enrolling as individual students, increasingly the pressure is to respond to local education authorities, and to individual school and college managements, as 'customers'.

The Response of Higher Education

These changes have occurred at a time when universities have been placed under very considerable financial and political pressure. The demand for 'quality' (sometimes defined in absolute terms by those 'who know' what good quality 'is', sometimes assumed confusingly to be defined by what the 'customer' chooses) has coincided with the demand for 'market responsiveness' and the development of mechanisms for ensuring that funding goes to those who follow 'approved' approaches.

It has also been paralleled by a very considerable expansion of higher education in England and Wales, based partly upon a belief (especially in the polytechnics) in the priority to be given to access to higher education among groups who historically have been under-represented. This pressure for expansion has also influenced institutional thinking with respect to management development programmes. There is in most cases an assumption that more students, more development or research contracts must be found, if only to ensure that the existing staff can remain in jobs, given the lowering of units of resource, and the consequently increasing staff-student ratio.

As a consequence, then, of political, organizational and professional changes in thinking, and something of an imperative for expansion, higher education has tended to respond in a number of ways. One consequence has been diversification, away from research and teaching towards more complex models which include consultancy, the provision of in-house training, providing a site for professional and other bodies to meet at conferences, and so on. However with respect to award-bearing courses, which still represent the largest resource commitment, the following represent a range of trends.

(a) *Expansion of current provision.* Some universities have simply attempted to expand the number of students on their current courses. This has tended to be the response either of the most prestigious (who have been able to 'cream off' a certain amount of work on the basis of their visibility, especially with respect to overseas students), or the most stagnant institutions. In many cases this has not worked, and some of these institutions are now facing considerable difficulties. Often, associated with a reliance on overseas students and a traditional individual-student-as-client orientation, these courses have not developed in their organisation or teaching method, and are now finding themselves no longer able to compete as readily with other institutions. The 'rules' that determine the definition of 'quality' are changing, to the disadvantage of such institutions.

(b) *Modularization and similar changes in the structure of provision.* Under the auspices of the Council for National Academic Awards[4], there has been established the national CAT (Credit Accumulation and Transfer) Scheme. This is a framework whereby courses can be designed to facilitate flexibility for students, enabling them to carry credit from one degree to another within the same or different institutions. The development of the CAT Scheme has implied modularization, and some polytechnics (such as Sheffield City Polytechnic) now have most if not all of their long course provision in this form. When applied to our

[4] A national body with a Royal Charter, responsible for the validation and award of degrees up to the PhD, taught within the 30 Polytechnics. The CNAA has had a major influence on the development and quality of provision in Education Management and Administration. It is due to be disbanded at the end of August 1992, when the polytechnics become chartered to award their own degrees.

field, it has allowed considerably more flexible provision than was normal in the 1970s. It is now possible for students undertaking a course of study within this framework to vary pace of study, mode of attendance and curricular choice, to a very considerable extent.

(c) *Extra-mural study.* The best known institution which has moved beyond the normal confines of the university building to provide management programmes on a distance learning basis, is the national Open University. This was established more than 20 years ago in response to a demand for access for those not able (by reasons of geography or other reason) to attend traditional full-time or part-time courses, and to those who needed a 'second chance' to study in higher education. It has had an important influence on development of thinking and practice in the field.

More recently, however, there have been a number of attempts to provide 'standard' courses at a location and in a mode of delivery appropriate to a particular group of students. Thus in my own institution, we have taught our undergraduate but post-experience Diploma in Education Management in several centres in England, and as far away as the Cayman Islands. In such cases, the programme and qualification awarded have been those of the institution, normally taught by the same staff who teach 'back home'. The venue for teaching, however, is more likely to be a school or college classroom, teachers' centre, or even hotel!

(c) *Distance learning.* As teachers have come under more financial and professional strain, several contradictory pressures have been developed. On the one hand, there has been more felt need for both qualifications and skills in Education Management, so that more teachers wish to study. On the other hand, there has been a strong feeling that the programmes ought to be either provided by, or at least supported by, the employer, to the extent that courses should take place during the working day — many teachers are reluctant to do all their studying at their own expense, when they see a major purpose as being the increase in organizational effectiveness. Schools themselves are coming under more financial pressure, with most being unable to fund teachers to replace those out of school studying. The consequence is that the demand is for courses which involve minimal and flexible attendance, rather than the extensive attendance previously assumed.

In response, many institutions now work on the basis that you only bring people together to do that which they cannot do elsewhere (as compared to the traditional approach which was to have the student justify why he or she should not be present!) The consequence is that much of what had been lecture material is now presented in the form of distance learning materials, to be used by students at times and in places to suit them.

(d) *Contract learning.* By this I mean an arrangement whereby a student negotiates a 'learning contract' specifying what is to be learned, how, when, with what resources: and that this is agreed on a one-off basis by the university, which then takes responsibility for its part of the contract (e.g. with respect to library access, tutorial support, etc.). Finally, the student's learning is assessed through the arrangements and on the criteria specified in the contract.

There has in the past been much resistance to the introduction of this approach into the taught degrees of many universities (although, ironically, the English PhD research degree

is based exactly on this model). However, in some institutions (notably Sheffield City Polytechnic), contract learning has been introduced with considerable success into the Education Management programme. It is now possible for students to negotiate such units within all our programmes, including the MSc in Education Management. Such contracts can be negotiated either by individuals or by groups.

(e) *Accreditation of Prior Learning.* This involves the university in recognising, and in allowing academic credit for, learning which has taken place prior to the student's enrolment on a course: and it forms part of the national CAT Scheme. Two types of evidence can be adduced in support. Where someone has completed work in one institution and has gained modules there, it is relatively easy to provide credit — the CATS provides a framework for doing so.

More difficult, however, is the case where a student claims to have learned through experience of doing a job, material which otherwise he/she might have learned on a systematic course of study. There is a tendency in higher education to assume that learning happens only 'at the feet of a lecturer': but clearly this is far from being the case, and it is important in all professional development that we recognise learning and development whatever the context within which it happens. A number of Education Management programmes now have clear rules and procedures for recognising such learning.

(f) *Franchising.* One response which is increasingly common in undergraduate studies in various subjects is to franchise a course to some other college.[5] It is not unusual, for example, to have a university 'franchise' the teaching of the first year of its BA in Business Studies to one or more colleges which are equipped by virtue of staffing, library resources, etc., to teach the programme. This may be in the same town, so that the students will move from that college to the polytechnic or university: or it may be held in another town, thus allowing students at least for that year to live at home prior to coming to the larger centre for the second and successive years of study. In such cases, the qualification awarded is that of the university; the same syllabuses are followed, and the same schemes of student assessment used. Control remains with the 'base' organization. Franchising is becoming a well-recognised way of higher education institutions expanding at minimal capital cost.

Within Education Management little franchising as defined above has been attempted, largely because there are few lower-level institutions equipped to do so. But it may well be that, as some areas of higher education (such as teacher education) contract, such arrangements might become more common, perhaps for a restricted number of modules of a diploma course.

(g) *Accreditation.* Much more common are accreditation arrangements. In these cases, a programme is taught outside of the university, normally not by university staff. It is,

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[5] Ranking in order of size and level of work, below polytechnics and universities, are a number of (often confusingly named) educational institutions. Specifically concerned with higher education, usually only at undergraduate level, and often based historically upon teacher education, are colleges and institutes of higher education. Then there are colleges of technology and major colleges of further education, which combine sub-degree work (concerned with professional, technical and craft level qualifications, as well as general and adult education) with a (varying) amount of higher level teaching.

however, 'accredited' by the university: that is, it is recognised as equivalent to that which is (or could be) taught within the university, and therefore those who acquire passes in this way are entitled to present them towards a university award, under agreed conditions. The CAT Scheme facilitates such an arrangement, for it is not necessary under this arrangement for a whole course leading to an award be accredited: it can be done on the basis of one or more modules alone. This provides a powerful opportunity for higher education to engage with professionals working within their own work-based management development programmes, to have the learning and professional development achieved recognised for the purposes of an academic award.

There is no doubt that, within many English schools and colleges of further education, there are staff well able to meet the criteria for appointment on to the university staff (although many could not afford to come at existing salary levels in higher education!) That the work they do should be recognised seems reasonable: but there are many difficulties in the way of so doing. Space does not permit a full development of these, but some may be noted:

- *Control over student entry.* If a programme is to be school based, designed primarily for its effect on the school, and delivered primarily in work time, the question of who takes part must be determined by these criteria. These may not be the criteria by which the university would have recruited its students.
- *Student assessment.* The purposes of the in-house programme may not call for the assessment of work done by the participants, or for them to meet any other performance criteria amenable to credit towards a qualification. Clearly, the university will require assessment for purposes of determining a pass list. There is a danger that this may distort the programme, taking it away from its proper internal function.
- *Activity versus learning.* An in-house programme is likely (especially given the typical absence of individual assessment) to centre around activities, and the way in which these relates to the performance of the institution. An academic programme is essentially concerned with learning outcomes: not so much with what he or she has done, but with what he or she has learned in the process.
- *Group work.* Management increasingly is seen as involving team work, and much in-house work in Education Management involves the development of organizational work teams. The notion of group learning need cause no difficulty for the university: but should it be possible for a small group of people who have studied and worked together, to be jointly assessed? It this is not to happen, it can cause the problems of distortion noted above. If it is to happen, particular problems can be caused, and will have to be anticipated.[6]
- *Level of conceptualization.* Many in-house programmes emphasize the specifics of the situation, or more general principles only in so far as these are seen as directly relevant to the specific case. The stress is upon problem solving in a particular situation, not upon

[6] It is perhaps worth noting that the Sheffield City Polytechnic Diploma in Education Management has for a number of years included provision for groups of students to submit project and other work jointly.

more generalised learning. To the extent to which this is the case, theoretical perspectives and conceptual skills tend to be underplayed. This is likely to limit the academic level at which the work can be credited.

- *Critical reflection.* If there is little incentive in such cases to reflect critically on the concepts or literature, there is likely also to be little emphasis upon critical reflection upon the school and its policies. The programme is likely to have been designed (or at least the design approved) by the senior staff of the school or college concerned: and it is not usual for them to encourage a programme which may, at least by implication, foster approaches which could undermine the authority of the principal and/or established policies.
- *Quality assurance.* If an institution of higher education is to accredit such a programme, it will be necessary for it to agree with the school or other body, a programme whereby the university can assure itself of the quality both of process and outcomes. This can relate at one level to the library and other learning resource provision available to participants; to the amount of time to be made available for reading; and for opportunity for participants to compare what they are doing within their organisation with what is done in similar organisations elsewhere.
- *Costs.* In-house management development provision is not cheap: and accreditation involves extra costs to both the university and school concerned. The school will almost certainly put pressure upon the university to have these costs minimized, and there is a danger that, if this pressure is accepted, the university may short-cut quality assurance procedures, to the eventual deprivation of all. There may be ways of meeting some of these costs if the university can justify a claim upon general core funding, by virtue of the in-house participants being registered as students of the university.

Models of Relationships

When reflecting on the last thirty or so years of higher education involvement in management development for education in England, it is possible to see several different models of relationships between the two which have operated (and still operate). In producing such a classification, clearly one incurs the danger of over-generalization: but perhaps the following *schema* might at least be suggestive.

(a) *The Client/Professional Relationship.* The earlier practice (in those days referred to as Educational Administration) was very much in the higher education tradition of seeing the individual course member as a student: someone (analogous to the 'patient' in the hospital) who was relatively passive, there to learn from the teaching staff and subject to the discipline both of the university and of the academic field in which he or she was studying.

At its best the relationship was seen as a professional one, whereby the university teacher was there to serve the student in his/her interests as a client: although at its worst, the student was neglected (if not exploited as a source of legitimation of the existence of the lecturer, whose real interest was in research or other activities). When the university moved towards working with employers and other organizations power tended to become more equalized, and

the 'client organization' was often better able to assert its own definition of its interests and needs, seeing the university more as a resource.

Clearly the Client Relationship model has its problems. Too often the university (or, more specifically, the lecturer) has been more than a little patronizing, indeed arrogant, in defining the needs of the 'client' and the ways in which these needs should and should not be met. The student has had little voice, either individually or corporately. It is interesting, for example, how difficult it is, with the best will in the world, effectively to implement an agreed policy for the involvement of students in academic policy making within the university. The relationship has been characterized by extremes in power disequilibrium.

When applied not to individuals but to organizations this relationship has often worked rather better, largely because of power being more evenly distributed. But still it has often worked in the interests of higher education rather than the client organization, because of the way in which others have allowed the university to define needs, with the result of the "academic tail wagging the professional dog".

(b) *The Customer/Provider Relationship.* More recently has come the notion that quality becomes defined by customer choice within a market framework. As noted above, there has always been an economic element to the work of universities. What has been added is the notion, not of customer choice (students have always chosen to go to one place or another, and client organisations also), but that "the customer is always right", and entitled to define their own needs and to shop around to find those 'providers' who will meet these needs. When applied to education, this leads to almost the converse of the problems of the traditional university model: given the way in which the British Government has empowered the marketplace, and deprived higher education of resources, it becomes tempting for higher education (influenced by an ideology becoming very pervasive), to give the customer what it wants.

May I illustrate some of the problems from my experience as an external examiner.

One university for which I examined at MEd level received a large number of overseas students, each bringing into the university much-valued student fees. The students came for the MEd or the PhD: and, in my view, the pass standard of the MEd was such that between 25% and 30% of those who passed (largely overseas students), were achieving at significantly below masters' level. I was assured by another external examiner that the same was happening with respect to the PhD. Why had this happened, and why did it continue? Perhaps it was significant that the Faculty was bringing in £1,000,000 a year in extra fees, and the university was disinclined to ask too many questions. The 'customers' were (at least in the short run, until the degree became publicly devalued) getting what they 'wanted'. But was this true for all of them, including the more able?

Another example has come to me recently. A certain secondary school had a 'windfall' of funds, and decided to spend the money on sending 15 or 20 of its staff to do a part-time masters' degree. It contacted a local university (for which I was an external examiner) and arranged, through its central CATS unit, for these teachers to undertake a special programme, taught by the university but located within the school, with a significant school input. One of

the modules to be taken during the first year was in Education Management: and when the work was assessed only two students passed. What had gone wrong? An internal explanation was that the central unit of the university had been too keen in accepting a 'customer' and its money, without making sure that the students were adequately capable, and without liaising sufficiently with academic staff. Undoubtedly part of the problem was that a number of the course members were capable of completing work at diploma level, but were marginal at masters' level: but they wanted an MA degree, and the university did not want to turn the business away. In contrast with my earlier example above, this university, via its assessment board, was refusing to lower standards, even at the cost of not meeting expectations (or 'wants' or 'needs'?).

(c) *The Partner Relationship.* There is an alternative to the rather patronizing Client Model and the hazardous Customer Model: and that is the development of relationships which begin with the notion of partnership. The other two models imply that one or other partner will be superordinate: this one leaves that question to negotiation of equals. Thus the university and the external body (whether a school, teachers' association, local education authority, another university) can come together as parties both of whom need to be satisfied through a negotiation process, in defining the appropriate relationship within that particular setting. The notion of partnership recognises the particular contribution of both parties within a framework of equality of value. One partner or the other may dominate in resource terms, or may contribute more of one element or another: but the emphasis is upon the equality of the value of the contribution, rather than its quantity. Thus the partnership is based on mutual recognition and the assumption of mutual dependence.

I will illustrate briefly with two examples from my current experience.

1. For many years the Centre for Education Management and Administration at Sheffield City Polytechnic has been working with the Society of Education Officers[7] at regional and national level, on management development programmes for administrators at middle and senior levels. Most of this work has comprised short courses, conferences and workshops, and has not led to paper qualifications. However, two years ago we were approached by the YHSEO who wished to have a programme they could offer to their members which would be flexible (and therefore modularized), professionally oriented, academically rigorous, and one where they could influence the nature of the programme and monitor its quality and relevance from the professional perspective.

   Following discussions, such a programme was designed, based upon the existing MSc in Education Management of Sheffield City Polytechnic, but incorporating special features (including specialist modules) requested by the Society and acceptable to the Polytechnic. A clear relationship has been worked out between the partners, defining the part each plays. The Society promotes the programme among its members; each member of its committee represents the programme within his or her local education department office,

[7] The Society of Education Officers is the national professional body for education officers of local education authorities in England and Wales, with a permanent secretariat in London. It is organized into regions, one of which is the Yorkshire and Humberside Region. Sheffield is within Yorkshire.

and acts as a first line referral in answering questions of prospective students. The YHSEO Management Development Committee advises on the development of the programme; members take part in the design of particular modules; and they monitor student satisfaction, in order to assure professional relevance. The Polytechnic's role is to guarantee the academic quality, and to take responsibility for delivery.

The teaching programme has just completed its first year, and has been well received so far. The SEO has gained through influencing the programme to meet its needs as perceived by the professional body; and the Polytechnic has gained through an extension to its programme, and many benefits which come through working closely with senior administrators.

2. Humberside is a county next to Yorkshire (Beverley, the county town, is about 80 miles from Sheffield), which has six colleges of further education. The college principals meet regularly, along with officers of the local education authority. A year ago I was approached by them and invited to join a consortium to develop college-based management development programmes, which would be organized across the colleges, and which would allow participants to obtain a recognized management qualification. Following discussions, a programme has now been designed (and commences in September 1992) which:
   - is modular, and will lead to the Polytechnic's Diploma in Education Management. This is at undergraduate level, below the level of the MSc.
   - will have as members middle and senior-level teaching and administrative staff drawn from all of the colleges;
   - will start with six taught modules. Each college takes responsibility (through a small team) for the design and delivery of one of the modules;
   - in time, the programme will develop to include a larger range of taught modules, contract learning modules, and management projects, supervised by college staff. Meanwhile, contract learning and project supervision will be available from Sheffield staff.

   The role of the Polytechnic at present is
   - to act in support of each of the college development teams, assisting them to design and deliver their module, and to obtain its accreditation from the Polytechnic;
   - to monitor the quality of provision and the assessment of student work;
   - to award the Diploma to those who meet the requirements.

The Future?

What then of the future for the relationship between English institutions of higher education and management development programmes in education?

It seems likely that for the next four or five years, we can look forward to a degree of political stability, with the present Government's policies being fairly clear. I would anticipate a continuing emphasis upon the market model for defining the relationship between institutions and units of government, with the local education authority becoming less and less important

(continuing a trend of some years). Schools and colleges, each with their own governing body acting as employer, are going to be increasingly autonomous, but in most cases will continue under considerable economic constraint. There will be continuing (or even increasing) demand for management development, but there will be difficulties in funding it: and institutions will become more conscious that 'he who pays the piper calls the tune'.

With respect to higher education, there will also be considerable financial pressure. Universities will move increasingly to being expected to fund their activities entirely out of fees charged: and this will mean that it will become more expensive to run programmes at the very time when the market will have difficulty in paying. So felt need in the market may not result in actual demand for programmes.

The response is likely to be increasingly for accreditation of activities undertaken within the employing organization, within a framework of partnership (rather than of patronage).

Many universities will find themselves ill prepared, either in their culture or procedures, for undertaking this task in the spirit which will be expected. The danger is that they might lower their academic standards in order to meet unrealistic demands from the market (especially with respect to the masters' degree). I hope this does not happen: but based upon my experience to date, it seems probable.

The result is likely to be a differentiation of the marketplace into two sections: those who look for active partnerships with institutions which are flexible, responsive, but wishing to maintain a rigorous, challenging relationship with their partners and to ensure high standards of teaching, assessment and administration; and those who will look at the width rather than the quality, and who will wish to buy cheap (in terms of both money and quality), while wanting the most impressive qualifications. In response, universities will have increasingly to define strategies, and make choices, which will have considerable significance for their market positions.

The consequence, I believe, will be increasing differentiation within and between universities in the field of Educational Management and Administration, continuing the current trend where some masters' degrees are more respected than others. Among those who are familiar with the field, what will matter in the future is not so much the degree you have, but where you obtained it. Does this mean that ours is becoming a mature discipline?